

Social Housing Regulation Bill

Report Stage Briefing:

Wednesday, 1 March 2023

Introduction

UNISON is the largest public service trade union in the UK, with over 1.3 million members. Our members include frontline staff and managers working full or part-time in public services and for private contractors providing public services. They provide a range of essential public services working in local authorities, the NHS, colleges and schools, the police service, the utilities (electricity, gas and water industries), transport and the community and voluntary sector, including housing associations. Many of our members are directly affected by Government housing policy as tenants or residents. We welcome the opportunity to highlight amendments and changes that we would like to see in the Social Housing Regulation Bill.

Background

Attached with this **Report Stage briefing** is our [Social Housing Regulation Bill Briefing from June 2022](#). We stand by the points raised in that briefing and urge you to review the document to gain a wider understanding of our views on the Bill as a whole.

Report Stage

This document sets out our key asks for the Social Housing (Regulation) Bill [Lords] as it is debated at Report Stage in the House of Commons after Prime Minister's Questions and Ten Minute Rule Motion tomorrow. UNISON hopes you may be available to speak in this debate to highlight the union's ongoing concerns about this Bill.

Suggested Report Stage Amendment

The Report Stage of the Bill offers the final opportunity to make amendments to the Bill before it is enacted.

We would like an amendment tabled to the Social Housing Regulation Bill which will require senior managers working for social housing landlords to obtain professional qualifications, to help drive up standards in the social housing sector. We ask that you give consideration to tabling an amendment which would;

- add a clause to the Bill that extends the current clause that states senior managers must hold professional qualifications to the Private Rented Sector, and not just social housing, to ensure minimum levels of regulatory compliance and
- that industry bodies and trade unions, such as, but not limited to, UNISON, be consulted to ensure that the training requirements, the cost of training and levels of qualification are sufficient to deliver the improvements in regulation the legislation is intended to deliver.

We would also welcome an amendment to widen the power of the Social Housing Regulator, as follows.

- To give the regulator the powers to take action against any landlord, not just social housing providers, so that reforms drive up standards are across the entire housing

system, and not just social housing sector. This protects all tenants and gives the regulator the appropriate level of oversight and powers of redress to ensure Landlords act in an ethical and transparent manner towards their tenants.

Key Talking Points

Please find below some talking points that we hope you will consider adding to your speeches.

- UNISON feels that senior managers working for landlords in the Private Rented Sector /agencies should also hold professional qualifications.
- Further clarity is needed on what the Bill delivers in practise, including
 - Definition of “senior managers” or roles that the requirement will apply to?
 - What will be the cost of training?
 - Who will oversee the qualifications?
 - What will the professional level/complexity of the training be?
 - Who pays for the training?
 - What are the consequences for not completing the training?
 - How long will the qualifications take to complete?
 - What is the timeline for implementation?
- Staff who study ‘on the job’ only get to study part-time, how will this affect compliance?
- Social landlords, especially councils, have limited resources and should be supported with funding and resources to implement the mandatory requirements on training, if implemented.
 - What support is Government giving to the costs?

If you require any further information or would like to discuss any of the points raised in this briefing, please do not hesitate to contact UNISON:

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UNISON Housing Website: <https://www.unison.org.uk/at-work/community/key-issues/housing/>

UNISON Social Housing Regulation Bill Briefing – June 2022

[file:///C:/Users/syon1/Downloads/Social-Housing-Regulation-Bill-UNISON-Briefing-Final%20\(2\).pdf](file:///C:/Users/syon1/Downloads/Social-Housing-Regulation-Bill-UNISON-Briefing-Final%20(2).pdf)

UNISON Briefing: White Paper – A fairer private rented sector

<https://www.unison.org.uk/content/uploads/2022/09/UNISON-Briefing-White-Paper-A-fairer-private-rented-sector-Final.pdf>

UNISON Report: A decent place to live: Homes fit for key workers:

<https://www.unison.org.uk/content/uploads/2021/07/A-decent-place-to-live-updated.pdf>

UNISON Housing manifesto: <https://www.unison.org.uk/content/uploads/2020/01/UNISON-Housing-Manifesto-JANUARY-2020-FINAL.pdf>